

Prevention

Partners

# Avenues

## Preventive Worksite Screening Benefit: A “Win-Win” for Employees *and* Employers

Many employers host the Prevention Partners Preventive Worksite Screening every year. If you, too, would like to make a difference in the lives of your coworkers, consider organizing a screening.

### Eligibility Expanded

Preventive Worksite Screenings are available to active employees and retirees whose primary insurance coverage is one of these plans offered by the Employee Insurance Program:

- State Health Plan Standard Plan
- State Health Plan Savings Plan
- Companion HMO
- CIGNA HMO
- MUSC Options



### A Bargain

The screening, a \$200 value, is available to you for just a \$15 copayment. Insurance pays the rest! Within two weeks of a screening, participants will receive their personal health profiles, highlighting any values outside the normal range. They can send this report to their physician or take a copy with them on their next office visit, which saves them money and avoids duplicate tests.

You never know what they will find when they draw your blood for a Preventive Worksite Screening. One woman learned she had diabetes. When a Columbia television news reporter interviewed her as part of a feature on the disease, she said the test probably saved her life. She also pointed out that it was quite a bargain.

### The Inside Spot



Nutrition .....	p. 2
Self-Care Handbook .....	p. 3
Health Sen\$e .....	p. 4
Feel Better Today...p.	4
Five Steps to Safer Healthcare .....	p. 6

### Easy to Host, Easy to Participate

Only 15 participants are required to host a screening at your work place. Because the screening takes place at your worksite, it reduces employees' time away from the job.

Regional Screenings are available to eligible subscribers whose worksites have fewer than 15 eligible employees, to employees who may

*Continued on page 3*

# Nutrition: The Facts Are at Hand

Most packaged foods have a Nutrition Facts label. The labels provide information to help you make smart food choices quickly and easily. In choosing foods, follow these guidelines.

- **Keep these low:** saturated fats, trans fats, cholesterol and sodium.
- **Get enough of these:** potassium, fiber, vitamins A and C, calcium and iron.
- **Check the percent (%) of Daily Value (DV):** 5% DV or less is low; 20% DV or greater is high.

## Check servings and calories.

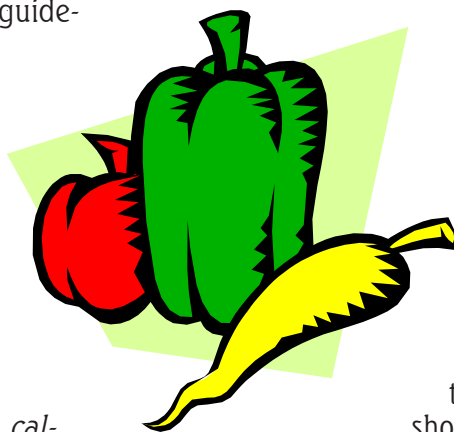
Look at the serving size and how many servings you are actually eating. If you double the number of servings you eat, you double the calories, nutrients *and* the DV percentage.

## Make your calories count.

Look at the calories on the label and compare them to the nutrients you are getting to decide whether the food is worth eating. When one serving of a single food has more than 400 calories per serving, it is high in calories.

**Don't sugarcoat it.** Since sugars contribute calories but provide few, if any, nutrients, look for foods and beverages low in added sugars. Read the ingredient list and make sure that sugars are

not one of the first ingredients listed. Some names for added sugar include *sucrose*, *glucose*, fructose, *high-fructose corn syrup*, *corn syrup* and *maple syrup*.



## Know your fats.

Look for foods low in saturated fats, trans fat and cholesterol to help reduce the risk of heart disease. Most of the fats you eat should be *polyunsaturated* and *monounsaturated*.

Keep your fat intake between 20% and 35% of total calories.

**1. Saturated fat** is found mostly in foods from animals and some plants. Here are some examples:

- **Foods from animals** include beef, veal, lamb, pork, lard, poultry fat, butter, cream, milk, cheese and other dairy products made from whole milk. These foods also contain dietary cholesterol.

- **Foods from plants** include coconut oil, palm oil and palm kernel oil (often called tropical oils), and cocoa butter.

**2. Hydrogenated fats.** During food processing, fats may undergo a chemical process called hydrogenation. This is common in

margarine and shortening. These fats also raise blood cholesterol.

**3. Polyunsaturated and monounsaturated fats** are found primarily in oils from plants.

- **Polyunsaturated fats** include safflower, sesame and sunflower seeds, corn, soybeans, many nuts and seeds and their oils.
- **Monounsaturated fats** include canola, olive oil, peanut oil and avocados.

**Reduce sodium (salt) and increase potassium.** Research shows that eating fewer than 2,300 milligrams of sodium (about 1 tsp of salt) a day may reduce the risk of high blood pressure. Most of the sodium people consume comes from processed foods, not from the saltshaker. Look for foods that are high in potassium, which counteracts some of sodium's effects on blood pressure.

Foods high in potassium include dried fruits (raisins, prunes, apricots, dates); fresh fruits (bananas, strawberries, watermelon, cantaloupe, honeydew melon); fresh vegetables

(beets, greens, spinach, peas, tomatoes, mushrooms); dried vegetables (beans, peas); fresh meats (turkey, fish); fresh orange juice; and canned or bottled grapefruit, prune and apricot juice.



## Self-Care Handbook: An Investment in Your Health



One way to cut healthcare costs is to reduce the demand for unnecessary medical services. This can be accomplished by learning medical self-care. Medical self-care increases efficient and appropriate use of medical services and helps people make more informed healthcare decisions. Medical self-care skills and tools give people the ability to understand:

- What is a real medical emergency
- When to see or call a healthcare provider
- When and how to treat yourself at home
- When to use outpatient, rather than inpatient, services
- What questions to ask your healthcare providers

### The Benefits of Self-Care Guides

In addition to reducing unnecessary treatment, there are many other benefits to learning how to make better healthcare decisions:

- Reduced healthcare costs
- Reduced absenteeism
- Greater patient satisfaction with care
- Improved quality of care
- Patient empowerment and sense of control

The *Health At Home Self-Care Guide* provides information on symptoms, solutions and self-care practices. Learn what to do for more than 200 health conditions you and your family might experience. The 384-page handbook is written in an easy-to-read, step-by-step format.

*Health At Home Self-Care Guide* is a book that will help anyone in your office or family who is interested in good health. Each copy is just \$7.35, which includes South Carolina sales tax.

### Health at Home Self-Care Guide Order Form

Name:		
Address:		
City:	State:	Zip Code:
Telephone:	E-mail:	
Quantity:	X \$7.35 each =	Total:

**Make check payable to Employee Insurance Program.** Sorry, no cash.

Please mail payment and order form to:

Prevention Partners  
Employee Insurance Program  
1201 Main Street, Suite 300  
Columbia, SC 29201

## Preventive Worksite Screening Benefit

*Continued from page 1*

have missed a screening held at their location and to eligible retirees. Regional Screenings are held each month at a different location around the state. Registration forms are listed on the EIP Web site at [www.eip.sc.gov](http://www.eip.sc.gov). Choose "Prevention Partners," and go to "Early Detection." Registration forms for Regional Screenings are available four to six weeks in advance of the screening date.

### Regional Screenings in 2005

Date	Location
June 23 .....	Hampton
July 14 .....	Florence
August 17-18 .....	Greenwood
September 14-15 .....	Columbia
October 13 .....	Rock Hill
November 3 .....	Beaufort
November 17 .....	Darlington
December 14.....	Anderson

### Just Remember 15!

- Only 15 eligible subscribers are needed for worksites to host a Preventive Worksite Screening.
- It takes fewer than 15 minutes for participants to complete the screening.
- It costs only \$15, but it is valued at \$200.

Please contact Prevention Partners at 803-737-3820 if you have any questions.



# Improving Healthcare Quality: A Guide for Patients and Families

Every day, millions of Americans receive high-quality healthcare. They get the right care, at the right time and in the right way. And they get the best possible results.

But every once in a while, something goes wrong. People receive healthcare services they don't need, or they can't get care when they need it. Sometimes, people are adversely affected by medical errors or mistakes that could have been prevented.

The fact is healthcare quality varies. Quality depends on many things, including where you live, who you are and how much is known about treating your condition. Healthcare providers and groups are working hard to improve healthcare quality. You can help, too. Research has shown that if you are more involved in your healthcare, you can get better results and feel more satisfied. Here's what you can do:

- **Tell your doctor about all medicines you take.** Be sure to include prescription drugs, over-the-counter drugs, vitamins and herbal supplements. Don't forget to tell your doctor about any allergies or side effects from taking medicines you have had in the past. This is very important when your doctor prescribes a new medicine.
- **Read the label on your prescription right away** when you pick it up from the drug store. Make sure it is what the doctor prescribed.
- **If you have several health problems or are in a hospital,** many people may be involved in your care. Make sure that someone (such as your personal doctor) is in charge. Speak often with that person. Ask a family member or friend to be part of your healthcare team if you are very sick or need major surgery.
- **Ask questions,** and keep asking them until you understand the answers. You have a right to speak with anyone who is involved with your care.
- **When you have an X-ray or laboratory test,** don't assume that "no news is good news." Ask your doctor or nurse about when and how you will receive the results. Will it be in person, by mail, or by phone? If you don't receive the results when you expect them, contact your doctor and ask for them.
- **If you are having surgery,** make sure that you, your doctor and your surgeon agree on what will be done. Find out what you can do before and after surgery to speed up your recovery.
- **Ask your doctor what the scientific evidence has to say** about your condition and treatment options. You can find more information online—fact sheets and other information on healthcare quality—by accessing the Quality Assessment section of the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality Web site at [www.ahrq.gov/qual/](http://www.ahrq.gov/qual/).
- **Know that "more is *not* always better."** Before you get a test or treatment, find out why you need it and how it can help you. You could be better off without it.

## Feel Better Today – Stay Healthy for Tomorrow

The food and physical activity choices you make every day affect your health—how you feel today, tomorrow and in the years to come. You may not be eating the right foods to give your body the nutrients it needs. You also may not be getting enough exercise to stay fit and burn those extra calories.

Eating right and being physically active aren't just a "diet" or a "program." They are the keys to a healthier life. You can reduce your

Source: Agency for Healthcare Research  
and Quality

Continued on page 5



risk of many chronic diseases, such as heart disease, diabetes, osteoporosis and certain cancers, and increase your chances for a longer life.

### It's Up to You

- Make smart choices from every food group.
- Find the right balance between food and physical activity.
- Get the most nutrition out of your calories.

### Make Smart Choices From Every Food Group

The best way to get the balanced diet you need is by eating a variety of nutrient-packed foods every day. Just be sure to stay within your daily calorie needs. A healthy eating plan is one that:

- Includes fruits, vegetables, whole grains and fat-free or low-fat milk and milk products
- Includes lean meats, poultry, fish, beans, eggs, and nuts
- Is low in saturated fats, trans fats, and cholesterol, salt (sodium) and added sugars.

### Find the Right Balance Between Food and Physical Activity

Becoming healthier isn't just about eating healthy. Regular physical activity is important for your overall health and fitness. It can reduce the risk of certain chronic diseases and helps you control your weight by balancing the calories you take in as food with the calories you burn each day.

Increasing your daily physical activity may also give you indirect nutritional benefits. The greater your physical activity level, the greater your energy needs are, and the easier it is to achieve a daily

diet that meets recommended nutrient requirements. A healthy lifestyle includes physical activity on a daily basis. Adults should participate in a minimum of 30 minutes of physical activity on a daily basis. The benefits of physical activity range from prevention of chronic disease to weight management.

### Physical Activity Key Recommendations

**1. To reduce the risk of chronic disease in adulthood,** engage in at least 30 minutes of moderate-intensity physical activity, above usual activity, at work or home on most days of the week.

**2. To help manage body weight and prevent gradual, unhealthy weight gain in adulthood,** engage in approximately 60 minutes of moderate-to-vigorous-intensity activity most days of the week, while not exceeding calorie intake requirements.

**3. To sustain weight loss in adulthood, if you have been overweight,** spend at least 60-90 minutes each day, engaging in moderate-intensity physical activity, while not exceeding caloric intake requirements. Check with your doctor before participating in this level of activity.

**4. Children and teenagers should be physically active for 60 minutes every day.** Setting aside 30-60 consecutive minutes each day for planned exercise is one way to incorporate physical activity, but it is not the only way.

Physical activity may include short intervals (e.g., 10 minutes each) of moderate-intensity activity. The total time is what is important for overall health and for

burning calories. Physical activity can be accumulated through three-to-six 10-minute intervals, over the course of a day.

Elevating the level of daily physical activity may also provide indirect nutritional benefits. A sedentary lifestyle limits the number of calories that can be consumed without gaining weight. The higher a person's physical activity level, the higher his or her energy requirement and the easier it is to plan daily food intake that meets recommended nutrient requirements.

Here are some simple ways to put more physical activity into your daily routine:

- Park the car farther away from your destination.
- Take the stairs, instead of the elevator or escalator.
- Take a little more time to play with children or pets. If you find it too difficult to spend the time after work, do it before work.
- Take fitness breaks, walking or doing desk exercises, instead of taking cigarette or coffee breaks.
- Try some gardening or home-repair activities.
- Avoid labor-saving devices. For example, turn off the self-propel option on your lawnmower or vacuum cleaner.
- Exercise while watching TV (for example, use hand weights, stationary bicycle/treadmill/stairclimber or stretch).
- Dance to music.
- Keep a pair of comfortable walking or running shoes in your car and office.

*Continued on page 6*



# Five Steps to Safer Healthcare

Source: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

## 1. Assume your role as an involved health consumer.

That means being an active member of your healthcare team and taking part in decisions. People who are more involved in their healthcare get better results. Asking questions, keeping an updated list of medications, understanding your health insurance and developing a good patient-doctor relationship can ensure you receive quality care.

**2. Request patient-education materials.** Patients should receive ongoing education from physicians, pharmacists and nursing staff about the brand and generic names of medications they are receiving, their indications, usual and actual doses, possible effects, drug or food interactions and how to protect themselves from errors. Patients can help prevent medication errors when they have been encouraged to ask questions about their medications before the drugs are dispensed.

**3. Become knowledgeable about your medical history.** Understanding your medical history is the first step in self-management of your health. You should know the diseases your grandparents, parents and siblings have been diagnosis with and your risk of developing chronic diseases, such as diabetes, heart disease and hypertension. Share this information, and never withhold your medical history from your healthcare team. Tell them everything you know.

**4. Talk to your doctor about which hospital is best for you.** If you have more than one hospital to choose from, ask your doctor about which hospital is best suited for your condition. Before you leave the hospital, be sure you understand your instructions regarding follow-up care.

**5. Make sure you understand what will be done during surgery.** Make sure you, your doctor and your surgeon agree on exactly what will be done during the operation. Ask your doctor: "Who will manage my care when I am in the hospital?" Ask your surgeon:

- "Exactly what will you be doing?"
- "About how long will it take?"
- "What will happen after the surgery?"
- "How can I expect to feel during recovery?"

Tell the surgeon, anesthesiologist and nurses about any allergies, and bad reactions to anesthesia. Also list any medications you are taking.

## Feel Better Today

*Continued from page 5*

### Get The Most Nutrition Out of Your Calories

The number of calories you should eat each day depends on your age, activity level and whether you are trying to gain, maintain or lose weight. You can use up the entire amount on a few high-calorie items, but you probably won't get the full range of vitamins and nutrients your body needs.

Lifestyle change in diet and physical activity is the best way to lose weight. A reduction of 500 calories or more a day is commonly needed. When it comes to weight control, it is calories that count.

Knowing your body's daily calorie needs can be an important first step in adopting a realistic diet and physical activity plan that can help you attain and maintain a healthy weight. Visit <http://sc.buildingbetterhealth.com/topic/cooltools.jhtml> to calculate your body mass index, fitness finder and calorie counting and burning.

### South Carolina Budget and Control Board:

**Mark Sanford, Chairman**  
Governor

**Grady L. Patterson, Jr.**  
State Treasurer

**Richard Eckstrom**  
Comptroller General

**Hugh K. Leatherman, Sr.**  
Chairman, Senate Finance Committee

**Robert W. Harrell, Jr.**  
Chairman, House Ways and Means Committee

**Frank Fusco**  
Executive Director

*Avenues* is produced by the  
South Carolina Budget and Control Board  
Employee Insurance Program

**PREVENTION PARTNERS**

Employee Insurance Program  
1201 Main Street  
Columbia, South Carolina 29201  
803-737-3820  
[www.eip.sc.gov](http://www.eip.sc.gov)